

Annex F:
EMERGENCY RELIEF AND RE-ENTRY

MISSION

To quickly evaluate and assess the immediate human needs (food, water, health/medical, and housing) and the operational status of vital community infrastructure (transportation, communications, and utility systems), and then, to assist impacted localities restore their essential services as soon as possible and to plan for and implement, if possible, an appropriate return of evacuees to their homes.

ORGANIZATION

Each locality is responsible for conducting its own immediate needs assessment. This assessment will determine if the locality is safe to permit reentry of resident, property/business owners. However, state and federal assistance is also available to assist or, if necessary, to conduct such an assessment. State participation will be coordinated by VDEM and federal participation by DHS/FEMA.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A. Return to the Risk Area

1. The decision of when to permit residents to return to the risk area, after a hurricane has passed, will be made cooperatively between the State EOC and localities in the impacted areas. This plan is not intended to replace any locality specific reentry plans or procedures. The decision to allow reentry will be based on an overall evaluation of the situation, including the following major factors:
 - a. Access - Following a major event an aerial survey of the impacted areas should be conducted immediately to identify and prioritize the most seriously damaged areas of the locality. This can determine the level of damage to major routes into the area and help to determine the time for debris clearance from those routes.
 - b. Water levels - Have floodwaters receded from most of the area?
 - c. Public health - Are water and sewer services operating properly?
 - d. Subsistence - Is food available or can it be made available in the impacted area?

- e. Utilities - Are electricity, telephone, and natural gas services operating or when can they be made available in the risk area?
 - f. Can existing services support the people already in the impacted area as well as an additional influx of people?
2. Once the decision to permit reentry has been established law enforcement personnel should set up checkpoints and roadblocks as needed based upon the level of damage that has occurred. Reentry can proceed as recommended based upon a Phased Reentry. Phased Reentry can limit primary access to essential personnel and help to manage the number of people entering the disaster area.
- a. Phase A – Phase A allows the reentry of agencies and groups that play key roles in restoring normal operations in the impacted area following a disaster. Law enforcement personnel should restrict access during this phase to provide for area safety and security. Phase A agencies and groups may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (1) Search and Rescue Agents
 - (2) Infrastructure and Utilities Repair Personnel
 - (3) Official Damage Assessment Teams
 - (4) Other personnel at the direction of the local EOC
 - b. Phase B – Phase B allows for the limited reentry of other critical groups as well as residents and business owners. The local EOC in coordination with public safety personnel should determine when it is safe to begin Phase B entry. Phase B groups may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - (1) Relief Workers
 - (2) Health Agencies
 - (3) Insurance Agents
 - (4) Residents and Business Owners/Operators
3. If the impacted areas cannot support the return of evacuated residents, temporary housing may be established in non-impacted areas near the disaster areas. State and local authorities in accordance with the State Disaster Recovery Plan will make decisions on the location and operation of temporary housing facilities.

4. In the event of a major disaster declaration, a Joint Field Office (JFO) will be established in or near the affected area. Federal and state officials will work from this facility to support disaster response and recovery operations. See the State EOP, Vol. 2: Disaster Recovery Plan.

B. Checkpoints

1. Local law enforcement officers should be primarily responsible for establishing and staffing checkpoints for reentry into their locality.
2. In order to expedite the reentry process, an Identification Verification Area (IVA) should be established close to each checkpoint for people with questionable identification. Every effort should be made to ensure that residents return to their homes as soon as safely possible. Law enforcement may limit the flow of returning traffic to better manage the checkpoints.

C. Identification Procedures

1. Identification procedures are intended to provide guidance for law enforcement personnel who may be directing access to disaster-impacted localities.
2. Residents, relief workers and business owners should have proper identification, such as a driver's license or company ID card, to enter an impacted area. Other documents to consider in establishing a right to enter may be utility bills, property tax receipts, car registration, and other legal documents presenting an address for verification.

D. Roadblocks

1. The strategic location of roadblocks is an important part of the reentry process. Roadblocks can be utilized to seal entry points into devastated areas for two main reasons.
2. Roadblocks can be used to prevent mass entry of the civilian population, which can clog rescue routes for people in the impacted areas who may require medical attention.
3. Roadblocks are a method to help curtail acts of unlawfulness such as looting.

E. Curfews

Localities may initiate curfews as a crime prevention measure depending on the intensity of the disaster and the level of damage sustained. The decision to implement a curfew and its duration rest with the local governing body.

F. Contingency Planning for a Minor Hurricane

1. A major Category 3 or greater hurricane, involving a large-scale evacuation with thousands of private vehicles moving inland, is the contingency upon which this plan is based. However, an appropriate response to a lesser storm must also be prepared. With a Category 1 or 2 hurricane, potential storm inundation areas will be smaller and the resulting number of evacuees and persons seeking public shelter will be more manageable locally. Special provisions for mass relocation inland and regional traffic control may not be needed.
2. Information to identify persons at risk from smaller hurricanes and to identify potential public shelters is also available in the Virginia Hurricane Evacuation Study. Low-rise public buildings or churches located inland, which may not have been suitable for major hurricanes, may be suitable as public shelters for minor hurricanes. Structures with extended beam roofs such as gymnasiums, or school classrooms with large areas of glass windows that could collapse or break during high winds, should not be used.

G. Contingency Planning for a Major Hurricane without Evacuation

1. The worst-case scenario would be a major hurricane accompanied by conditions, which preclude a large-scale evacuation. Such conditions could be caused by any number of factors to include an extremely fast-moving or suddenly shifting major hurricane, flooded routes of egress, or a delayed decision to evacuate.
2. First, evacuate residents that live in potential storm inundation areas and mobile homes. Public safety personnel should be designated and trained to effect such an evacuation. Second, residents that do not live in storm inundation areas or mobile homes should be advised to shelter in-place during the storm and be prepared to be self-sufficient for several days. Buildings designated as public shelters should be capable of withstanding hurricane wind loading conditions.
3. After the hurricane passes, pre-selected large facilities should be designated as “congregate care centers” from which water, food, locator services, emergency medical care, and other essential services can be provided to persons displaced from their homes by the storm. Local EOCs will coordinate with the State EOC to arrange for the provision of these services as needed within 12 hours of the passing of the storm. To the extent possible, back-up power generators, a potable water supply, back-up communications, EMS units, port-a-potties and other essential items should be pre-positioned at designated congregate care centers 24 hours before the arrival of the storm. Although public school facilities may be suitable, the resumption of normal school schedules and activities may psychologically be a much-needed part of returning the community to normal.

4. Following a major disaster such as Hurricane Katrina or Rita, substantial federal disaster relief manpower and equipment resources will be available. Contingency planning and coordination to facilitate the prompt set-up and delivery of these services will be critical.